



NEWS RELEASE
*Office of the
United States Attorney
for the
District of Nebraska*
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April 22, 2009

United States Attorney Joe W. Stecher and the Tri City Drug Task Force consisting of the Nebraska State Patrol, Grand Island Police Department, Hall County Sheriff's Office, Adams County Sheriff's Office, Department of Homeland Security - Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announce the following information for the attention of the media:

Event Triggering this Release:

The Honorable Richard G. Kopf sentenced Gary Zierke, Jr. to a term of imprisonment of 360 months (30 years) today following Mr. Zierke's conviction for conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine between October 2007 and February 2008, as well as distribution of methamphetamine on February 14, 2008. Mr. Zierke was found guilty of both counts after his jury trial concluded on January 12, 2009. Additional terms of Mr. Zierke's sentence require that he will be placed on supervised release for a period of 5 years once he is released from prison, and also that Mr. Zierke pay a \$100 special assessment for each of the two counts for which he was convicted.

At the sentencing hearing Judge Kopf found that Mr. Zierke was responsible for conspiring to distribute over 500 grams of methamphetamine. Additionally Judge Kopf found that a number of sentencing enhancements applied to Mr. Zierke's case. Judge Kopf found that Mr. Zierke held a manager or supervisor role in the conspiracy with respect to his son who sold methamphetamine for Mr. Zierke. Mr. Zierke was found to be in possession of a firearm in connection with his offense. Mr. Zierke was also found to have obstructed justice by asking his son to intimidate or harm the witnesses against Mr. Zierke prior to trial. And Judge Kopf found that Mr. Zierke qualified as a career offender, having at least two prior convictions of crimes of violence.

Name of Defendant: Gary Zierke, Jr.

AKA:

Age: 40

City of Residence: Grand Island, Nebraska

Crime(s) Charged and Potential Penalty: Conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine - 5 to 40 years imprisonment, up to a \$2,000,000 fine, and 4 years of supervised release and a \$100 special assessment; Distribution of methamphetamine, up to 20 years imprisonment, up to a \$1,000,000 fine, 3 years of supervised release and a \$100 special assessment.

Specific Location of Alleged Crime: Grand Island, Nebraska

Location of Arrest: Grand Island, Nebraska

Alleged Dollar Loss/Type and Quantity of Drug: Over 500 grams of methamphetamine

Others Charged in Same Scheme: None

Relevant Dates:

Date of Alleged Crime: Conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine - October 2007 through February 2008; Distribution of methamphetamine - February 14, 2008.

Federal Arrest Date: 04/30/2008

Date Complaint Issued: N/A

Indictment Returned Date: 04/24/08

Initial Appearance Date: 05/01/08

Plea or Trial and Date(s): Jury Trial 01/12/09 through 01/16/09

Sentencing Date: 04/22/09

Next Court Hearing Type and Date: Appeal

Assigned Magistrate Judge: David Piester

Held without Bond, or Released from Custody: Held without bond

In Continuous Custody Since: February 14, 2008

Assigned District Court Judge: Richard Kopf

Initials of Assigned AUSA/Preparer of THIS Release: MRM